

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Camille Lombardo.

# RECOGNIZING THE CAREER OF DR. WATTS

## HON. K. MICHAEL CONAWAY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 6, 2017

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. W. David Watts on his distinguished tenure at the University of Texas of the Permian Basin.

For the past fifteen years, Dr. Watts has served as the President of UTPB. Under his leadership, UTPB has seen an unprecedented growth and the university's reputation has grown exponentially. Since 2001, the university enrollment increased from 2,200 to 6,315 students and the availability of student housing has increased from just six buildings with 96 beds to 37 buildings with 1,197. These additions have significantly impacted the local economy and transformed UTPB to an established university community.

Early into his presidency, Dr. Watts made a commitment to expand educational opportunities by investing in online programs to allow students to earn a degree from a distance and allow for the development of career opportunities throughout the region. These efforts have led UTPB to be recognized by numerous outlets, such as BestColleges.com and U.S. News and World Report, as one of the most affordable online programs in the nation. In addition, Dr. Watts' vision of expanding access to quality education has also led to the creation of Texas' first entirely virtual Early College High School network. This network allows universities and colleges to partner with local school districts to offer at risk high school students to earn a high school diploma and up to sixty college credits at no cost. These accelerated courses reduce the barriers to college access and increased college readiness with these students. This program has allowed thousands of students to set out on their path to achieve their professional goals.

Dr. Watts' commitment to quality education has allowed UTPB to be the first school in Texas to offer a \$10,000 bachelor's degree in select majors and is recognized as the least expensive Texas public, four-year institution. Under his leadership, UTPB has received national accreditation in Art, Business, Education, Mechanical Engineering and Petroleum Engineering, Social Work, Music, Nursing, and Athletic Training Education. These initiatives have allowed UTPB to leave its imprint on the workforce, and it could not have been accomplished without Dr. Watt's leadership.

Over the last few years, Dr. Watts spearheaded efforts to write a new chapter in UTPB's history by bringing college football to the university. Prior to this, UTPB was the only public university west of I-35 that did not participate in football. Now UTPB is in a more competitive position to attract new students to the Permian Basin. Last year, the Falcons kicked off the inaugural season and set the foundation for the program. The team looks to build off of that progress as they begin to prepare for next season.

Dr. Watts' contributions to UTPB will always be remembered and his impact will surely be

felt by generations to come. As he and his wife Denise embark on a new chapter in their life, I wish them all my best.

# PERSONAL EXPLANATION

## HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 6, 2017

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to have my votes recorded on the House Floor on Monday, April 3, 2017. Weather across the Midwest delayed my flight to Washington, D.C. until after votes had been called. Had I been present, I would have voted in favor of H. Res. 92 and H.R. 479.

# INTRODUCTION OF BIPARTISAN RESOLUTION EXPRESSING STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE COUNTRIES OF EASTERN EUROPE AND THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION

## HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 6, 2017

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of a bipartisan resolution I introduced earlier today with my colleague JOHN SHIMKUS expressing strong support for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). This resolution reaffirms the importance of harmony and stability rather than war and conflict and acknowledges the NATO's pivotal role in achieving such goals.

NATO remains the most important and critical security link between the United States and Europe.

The incorporation of Eastern European countries into NATO has contributed towards a vision of a stable and united Europe. NATO allies and partners in both Central and Eastern Europe have stood alongside the United States in joint peace operations in the Western Balkans, Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere.

Our resolution emphasizes the United States' strong commitment to the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, and democratic development of the countries that have emerged from the former Soviet Union, including Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, Georgia, Ukraine, and Moldova. During the past three decades, many of these countries have undertaken considerable political and economic reforms necessary to achieve aspirations for European integration and Euro-Atlantic cooperation.

I want to thank Congressman SHIMKUS for his partnership on this resolution and urge my colleagues to pass it swiftly to reaffirm the United States' commitment to our NATO allies.

# TRIBUTE TO NOEMI TORRES—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

## HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 6, 2017

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year,

we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my congressional district. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Noemi Torres of West Hollywood, California.

Noemi Torres immigrated to the United States from Guadalajara, Mexico at the age of 13. After some time in Seattle, Washington, she came to Los Angeles and now calls West Hollywood home. Ms. Torres came to California, as many do, to pursue her dreams. While she has a passion for photography and acting, she found herself working with a successful startup telecommunications company, and it was while at that company, that she was exposed to the real estate industry. Now Noemi is on the Modern Living LA team of the John Aaroe Group Sunset, where she uses her considerable talents to help her clients with their real estate needs.

Along with her incredible professional accomplishments, Ms. Torres has also shown herself to be an astoundingly capable community leader. She volunteers for Project Angel Food, AIDS Walk Los Angeles, the Revlon Run/Walk, Children's Hospital Los Angeles, Heal the Bay, and the Downtown Women's Center. Noemi especially shines in her advocacy in her two terms on the City of West Hollywood Women's Advisory Board, which she currently chairs.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Noemi Torres.

# RECOGNIZING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF GUS MACHADO

## HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 6, 2017

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Mr. Gus Machado and celebrate his career.

Gus moved to the United States from Cuba with his family in 1949, and has become a symbol of the American dream for many. Through hard work and determination, Gus has built several successful car dealerships. He has managed to stay in business through a recession that had a significant impact on car sales, and worked diligently to avoid downsizing his workforce and keep others employed. Throughout his career in car sales, Gus has acted as an honorable man with the best interests of the community at heart.

For the past seven years, Gus Machado's businesses have received the Blue Oval Certification status from Ford Motor Company. Additionally, in 2013, one dealership received Ford Motor Company's highest honor, the President's Award.

Gus has proved himself to be dedicated to improving his community. In 2008, he founded the Gus Machado Family Foundation, which provides children with backpacks full of school supplies. The Foundation also works to keep children healthy by providing them with immunizations.

Gus is deeply involved with the U.S.-Cuba Democracy PAC, an organization dedicated to promoting freedom and democratic ideals in the communist country of Cuba. Although he

has lived in Florida for most of his life, Gus remembers his native Cuba and has not lost sight of the importance of allowing the Cuban people the same basic rights and freedoms we take for granted in the United States that are stifled under the Castro regime.

For his successful businesses, involvement in the community, and unfailingly optimistic outlook, Gus Machado is an excellent inspiration for Miami and Florida. It has been a privilege to know him and his family, including the love of his life Lilliam, who has become a dear friend of mine. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating him on his work to date and wishing him continued success.

#### HONORING LINDA MCGURK'S MANY YEARS OF SERVICE TO EDUCATION

##### HON. VICENTE GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 6, 2017*

Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Linda McGurk for her 25 years of service as principal of Ben Milam Elementary School in McAllen, Texas.

Linda McGurk received her Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from The University of Texas Pan-American in 1964. That same year, she began teaching first grade. In 1968, while raising a family with her husband James McGurk, Linda McGurk served on the St. Joseph's School Board and volunteered with the Edinburg Parks and Recreation Department, the Edinburg Junior Service League. Linda McGurk became principal of St. Joseph Catholic School in 1984. Two years later, she earned her Master's in Educational Administration from The University of Texas Pan-American. In 1992, Linda McGurk was named principal of Ben Milam Elementary School, a position she still holds today. Over the course of her tenure at Ben Milam, she has helped thousands of children embark on an educational journey.

In 2006, the University of Texas Pan-American recognized Linda McGurk for her leadership and countless contributions to elementary education in South Texas. And in 2012, the Texas Classroom Teachers Association named her Administrator of the Year. Most recently, the McAllen Education Foundation honored Linda McGurk for her commitment to student success, naming her an "Outstanding Educator" this past year.

For more than 50 years, Linda McGurk has dedicated her life to expanding educational opportunities for all. She has been a champion of student success and her commitment to parents, teachers, and staff at Ben Milam Elementary School is admirable.

As we recognize Linda McGurk's service to the McAllen Independent School District, we also celebrate Ben Milam Elementary School's 50th Anniversary.

If walls could talk, the walls of Ben Milam Elementary School would tell an inspirational story spanning half a century. Milam Elementary School has molded numerous generations of McAllen's young minds and given them the tools they need to succeed.

Mr. Speaker, this week South Texas honors a great educator. It is my privilege to recognize Mrs. Linda McGurk in the U.S. House of Representatives today.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF THE 38TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TAIWAN RELATIONS ACT

##### HON. DONALD M. PAYNE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 6, 2017*

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 38th Anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA), which has played an essential role in advancing the shared interests and values of the United States and Taiwan. Taiwan has become the United States' 10th largest trading partner and is a beacon of democracy in East Asia.

Along with the TRA, the "Six Assurances" have also guided our relationship with Taiwan. Three years after the TRA was enacted, President Reagan issued the "Six Assurances," reaffirming our nation's support for Taiwan. There is one area that, because of China's intransigence, needs further consideration. China has blocked Taiwan's entrance into international organizations where Taiwan could play a meaningful role.

In addition to security, the United States and Taiwan have a close economic partnership. In 2016, bilateral trade was slightly over \$65 billion. Taiwan and New Jersey also have very close trade ties. In 2015, Taiwan was New Jersey's 6th largest export market in Asia, with New Jersey's exports to Taiwan reaching \$491 million.

This week, Chinese President Xi visited the United States and met with President Trump. While this meeting presented a constructive opportunity, the interests must in no way be marginalized. The commitments made in the Taiwan Relations Act and the "Six Assurances" must never be compromised.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to be a friend of Taiwan and her people, and to recognize the anniversary of the TRA.

#### TRIBUTE TO CHRISTINE RODRIGUEZ—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

##### HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 6, 2017*

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Christine Rodriguez, of Elysian Valley, a unique neighborhood in Los Angeles, California.

Christine has spent many years of her life serving her community through her work as a librarian and through volunteering. She was the Children's Librarian at the East Los Angeles County Library, and then became a volunteer at that library, leading the Summer Reading Program. Since 1994, Ms. Rodriguez has worked for the City of Burbank's libraries, and is currently Supervising Librarian at the Buena Vista Branch Library.

A consummate volunteer, Christine has been active at Dorris Place Elementary

School, running school book fairs, fundraising and participating in the parent support organization. She is a graduate of the Leadership Burbank program, where she assisted with fundraising for Monterey High School in Burbank, and was active in the John Burroughs High School Boosters, where she raised money for the water polo team.

Ms. Rodriguez served as Secretary and Treasurer of the Elysian Valley Neighborhood Council, chairing the Neighborhood Purposes Grants Committee, utilizing her longtime city employment knowledge. Her current volunteer organizations include serving as a member of the Elysian Valley Fruit Share, where excess fruit from neighborhood gardens is given to residents without gardens, attending a variety of neighborhood community meetings, and as a member of the Elysian Valley Art Collective where she raised funds for two of the annual Frogtown Artwalks. In addition, Christine is an art quilter whose artwork has been displayed at the Cactus Gallery in Elysian Valley.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Christine Rodriguez.

#### RECOGNIZING ARTHUR A. ANSELENE

##### HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 6, 2017*

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Arthur A. "Art" Anselene on the occasion of his retirement as Town Manager of the Town of Herndon. For 41 years, Art has dedicated his life to the service of his community and the residents of Herndon. In 1976, he assumed the position of Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation for the Town of Herndon, a position in which he would serve for 31 years, and in 2007 he was appointed Town Manager.

His tenure as Director of Parks and Recreation was marked by the creation of many new events in the Town. These included, among others, the inaugural Herndon Festival, the Labor Day Festival, the July 4th celebration, the Turkey Trot, Holiday Arts and Craft Show, and the always popular summer concert series. In addition, Art worked with the Mayor and the Town Council on a number of public works projects including the Herndon Community Center, Chestnut Grove Cemetery, the Downtown Master Plan, and the Herndon Metrorail Station Area Plan.

Under his leadership, the Parks and Recreation Department became one of only 66 elite parks agencies in the country and the fourth in Virginia to receive national agency accreditation. He oversaw the development of a comprehensive parks and recreation system for the town which included a dozen parks, the Herndon Centennial Golf Course, an indoor tennis center, and the flagship Herndon Community Center. As Town Manager for Herndon, Art has had oversight responsibility for all town operations including Community Development, Finance, Human Resources, Parks and Recreation, Police, Public Works, Golf, Cemetery, Communications and Economic Development, IT, and the Town Clerk.

His efforts have resulted in the Town of Herndon receiving numerous local, state and